

NOTES ON THE DISTRIBUTION AND MORPHOLOGY OF THE WATER STRIDER *METROBATES ALACRIS* DRAKE (HEMIPTERA: GERRIDAE)¹

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ABSTRACT: *Metrobates alacris* Drake, previously known only from Louisiana, was collected in Hempstead County, Arkansas, and Jefferson County, Texas. Two taxonomically valuable characters, a mesosternal spur and hairs on the pygophore, are described.

DESCRIPTORS: *Metrobates alacris*, Hemiptera, Gerridae, water strider, Arkansas, Texas, distribution, morphology.

Drake (1955) described *Metrobates alacris* from Tallulah, Louisiana, and based his description on five specimens collected on July 17, 1930, by H.B. Mills. Gonsoulin (1974) reported this species from Allen, Beauregard, and Vernon parishes, Louisiana. This paper presents two new locality records and figures two previously undescribed morphological characters.

Two male and eight female *M. alacris* were collected on July 29, 1975, from Bois d'Arc Creek, seven miles southwest of Spring Hill, Hempstead County, Arkansas. Bois d'Arc Creek is a small stream with a mud and sand substrate and relatively fast flow. Other water striders found at this site include *Gerris canaliculatus*, *G. nebularis*, *Rheumatobates hungerfordi*, *R. palosi*, *R. tenuipes*, and *Trepobates subnitidus*. On June 16, 1976, 23 male, 16 female and 38 late instar nymphs of *M. alacris* were taken from Pine Island Bayou two and one-half miles south of Sour Lake, Jefferson County, Texas. Pine Island Bayou is a large stream with a mud substrate and slow flow. *G. canaliculatus*, *R. hungerfordi*, *R. palosi*, *R. tenuipes*, and *T. subnitidus* were also collected at this locality. All specimens collected at both sites were apterous. The present known distribution of *M. alacris* is shown in Figure 1.

Male *M. alacris* have a single median mesosternal spur (Fig. 2) and moderately long hairs on the lateral margins of the pygophore (Fig. 3). Neither of these characters were mentioned in the original description (Drake, 1955); however, Dr. Richard C. Froeschner (pers. comm.) examined the male holotype and single male paratype of *M. alacris* in the Drake Collection, U.S. National Museum, and found that both specimens have these characters. The mesosternal spur was imbedded in adhesive and was not visible until the specimens were soaked off the points on which they had been mounted.

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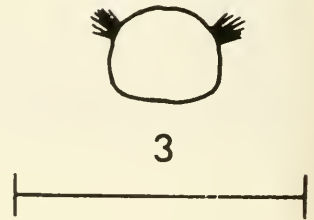
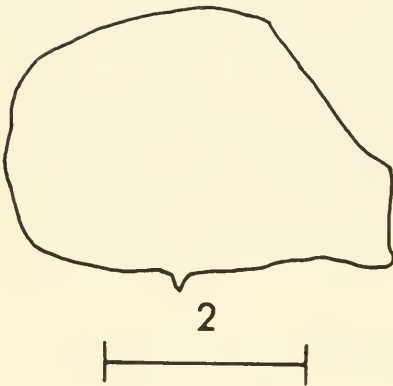


Figure 1. Distribution of *M. alacris*.

Figure 2. Mesothorax of male *M. alacris*, left lateral view.

Figure 3. Pygophore of *M. alacris*, ventral view.